

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-11 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00

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INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

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AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L NIAMEY 2658

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, PGOV, NG

SUBJECT: DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY DALLEY'S MEETING WITH PRESIDENT
KOUNTCHE

1. IN WIDE RANGING MEETING WITH DASS DALLEY AND MRS.
HOLLOWAY JUNE 13, PRESIDENT KOUNTCHE UNDERLINED INTENSE
CONCERN ABOUT AFRICAN SECURITY PROBLEMS , EXPRESSED APPREHENSION
ABOUT LIBYA'S INTEREST IN NIGER URANIUM, CALLEYKFOR REALISTIC
APPROACH ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN AFRICA, AND SAID U.S./AFRICAN
POLICY SHOULD STILL FOCUS ON DEVELOPMENT RATHER THAN SPECIFIC
POLITICAL DISPUTES.

2. AFTER BRIEF PRELIMINARIES, KOUNTCHE OUTLINED BROAD PICTURE
OF AFRICA AND ITS PROBLEMS. AFRICA, PRESIDENT SAID, IS ONLY
CONTINENT STILL HAVING ITS NATURAL RICHES LARGELY UNEXPLORED
AND, AT SAME TIME, OFFERS UNIQUE STRATEGIC ADVANTAGES TO
MAJOR POWER BLOCKS IN THE WORLD. RECENT SECURITY SITUATION, WHICH
PRESIDENT CHARACTERIZED AS DETERIORATING SICE. ANGOLA, IS ROOTED
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IN AFRICA'S GREAT UNDERDEVELOPMENT WITH CONSEQUENT NECESSITY FOR
AFRICAN NATIONAS TO GET HELP FROM OUTSIDE. MANY AFRICAN NATIONS ARE
TOO WEAK OR TOO UNSTABLE PB PREVENT THE ENCROACHMENTS THAT AID FROM
COMMUNIST BLOCK INEVITABLY ENTAILS. BUT THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT
KINDS OF IMPERIALISM, PRESIDENT REFLECTED, AND IT IS IMPORTANT TO
RECOGNIZE THAT THERE ARE IMPERIALISTS (AN OBVIOUS REFERENCE TO
LIBYA) IN AFRICA AS WELL. IF AFRICANS ARE STRONG AND REALLY INSIST

ON INDEPENDANCE, ASSISTANCE FROM MANY SOURCES INCLUDING COMMUNISTS CAN BE USEFUL. IN ANY CASE, THE WEST MUST CONTINUE TO GIVE AFRICA A VIABLE DEVELOPMENT OPTION, OTHERWISE THERE WILL BE DRIFT, DECLINE, AND PENETRATION.

3. KOUNTCHE UNDERLINED THAT NIGER IS NOT ASKING U.S. FOR ARMS. DALLEY ASKED KOUNTCHE'S VIEW ABOUT HOW U.S. SHOULD RESPOND TO RECOMMENDATIONS THAT IT BE MORE "POLITICAL" IN ITS APPROACH TO AFRICA GIVEN CONTINENT'S MOUNTING SECURITY PROBLEMS. PRESIDENT SAID HE HAS STRONG VIEW THAT US SHOULD STICK TO A DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY PROVIDING GREATER AMOUNTS OF DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE IN REASONABLE TIME FRAME.

4. PRESIDENT SAID HE UNDERSTOOD NEED ON PART OF WEST TO BE MORE DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN SITUATIONS LIKE ZAIRE. BUT ZAIRE, HE SAID, IS GOOD CASE TO PROVE POINT THAT ECONOMIC DETERIORATION WILL INEVITABLE PRODUCE A ROTTEN (HE EXCUSED HIMSELF FOR USE OF WORD BUT REPEATED IT) REGIME UNABLE TO ENDURE.

5. TURNING TO HUMAN RIGHTS, KOUNTCHE APPLAUDED ADMINISTRATION'S EMPHASIS ON UNDENIABLE FUNDAMENTALS OF DECENCY WHICH ALL GOVERNMENTS SHOULD SUPPORT. NIGER CERTAINLY DODI. AT SAME TIME, PRESIDENT SAID, HE WANTED U.S. TO UNDERSTAND THERE IS A SENSE IN WHICH AFRICA IS NOT RIPE FOR DEMOCRACY IN REAL MEANING OF TERM. THE MARGINAL LEVEL OF EXISTENCE AT WHICH MOST AFRICANS LIVE EXCLUDES THEM FROM MEANINGFUL POLITICAL PARTICIPATION. CONFIDENTIAL

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ADDED TO THIS, AFRICAN INTELLIGENCE, FORMED DURING AND AFTER COLONIAL PERIOD WHEN OPPOSITION TO EVERYTHING WAS A FASHIONABLE APPROACH, IS STILL LARGELY PREDISPOSED TOWARD COMMUNIST AND COLLECTIVIST SOLUTIONS INIMICABLE TO DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS.

6. TO TAKE A CONCRETE EXAMPLE, PRESIDENT SAID, THERE IS LOTS OF URANIUM IN NORTHERN NIGER AND THERE ARE "VULTURES" (READ LIBYANS) TRYING TO GET AT IT. CAN I, THE PRESIDENT CONTINUED, GIVE GREEN LIGHT TO KNOWN OPPONENTS TO GO INTO AREAS EXPLOITING THIS SITUATION? I DO NOT SAY THIS, PRESIDENT CONTINUED, TO JUSTIFY MYSELF OR A MILITARY REGIME. BUT HE SAID HE HOPED FRIENDS WOULD TAKE REALISTIC VIEW OF NIGER'S VULNERABILITIES AND PROBLEMS.

7. CONCLUDING SESSION, DALLEY THANKED PRESIDENT FOR OVERVIEW AND INDICATED HE WOULD CONVEY PLEA FOR CONTINUING FIRM U.S. COMMITMENT TO DEVELOPMENT. HOLLOWAY EXTENDED GREETING TO AMBASSADOR YOUNG. PRESIDENT SAID HE WELL AWARE OF U.S. POLITICAL PROCESSES AND OF WAY U.S. POLICY TOWARD AFRICA AND ASSISTANCE BUDGETS GET FORMED. BUT HE SAID HE HOPED PRESIDENT CARTER COULD SOMEHOW EXERCISE A FREER HAND WITH CONGRESS AND THE BUREAUCRACY IN DELIVERING DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE MORE RAPIDLY. COMMENT: MOST OF WHAT PRESIDENT SAID HE HAS TOLD US AND OTHER HIGH-LEVEL WASHINGTON

VISITORS BEFORE. PRIME NEW EMPHASIS SEEMS TO BE HIS MOUNTING
CONCERN ABOUT LIBYANS ("AFRICAN IMPERIALISTS" OR "VULTURES")
AND WHAT THEY ARE UP TO IN NIGER. JAMES

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